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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

Constitution

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State

In a California town, a militia is welcomed by some, cautioned by others

The parking lot of H&L Lumber in Mariposa, CA, was host to a flurry of activity Sunday as members of a local militia sporting military-style fatigues handed out pancakes and steak sandwiches to evacuees of the Oak Fire raging nearby. Along with breakfast, they doled out business cards with QR codes and directions to join their militia. "I'm fine with them helping out with relief efforts as long as they don't start to set up roadblocks or do any security work. I don't want them doing the work of the sheriff's office," said Rain Winchester, a manager at nearby Monarch Inn.

The militia is becoming a consistent presence in rural Mariposa County southeast of Sacramento with a population of 17,131 scattered across 14 towns.

Providing immediate assistance in military-style garb during an emergency is a recruiting tactic used by militias. Militias around the nation have seized on disasters as opportunities to entangle themselves into the politics and emergency services of small communities.

Serving as de facto aid organizations is a common recruitment and community ingratiation tactic used in rural areas to win support and acceptance during emergencies, said Rachel Goldwasser, a research analyst at the Southern Poverty Law Center.

"The [militia] agenda is to recruit members of the community, including victims into their organizations, legitimize them, and radicalize people into holding grievances against the government they may very well express through intimidation or violence."

Echo Company is one of hundreds of active militias across the U.S., according to a 2016 tally by the SPLC. Experts have warned that militia groups have been emboldened by former President Donald Trump and other leaders of the Republican Party.

Echo Company was ousted from the larger California State Militia organization in 2020 for capitalizing on larger, fictitious fears of antifa looters and "for behavior that was interpreted as potentially inciteful and militant."

A sheriff's office Facebook post warned residents to "be aware of a local militia around the Mariposa town area."

The post was soon flooded with support for the militia. Hours later, the sheriff's department issued an "update" softening their stance.

The updated post reads. "We are not unsupportive of community groups helping those affected by the Oak Fire, however it is important that we inform the community of resources available to them by Mariposa County."

"This post was intended to clarify that we have not activated [the militia], they are acting on their own courteous accord," the post reads. "We appreciate their efforts and any [of] the efforts of other private groups or entities helping our community."

Wildfires have been a particularly active time for militias, often due to misinformation that antifa or groups of looters were coming to take advantage of their communities. In 2020, law enforcement in California and the Pacific Northwest struggled to contain false rumors that antifa was intentionally setting wildfires so that "antifa buses" could surge into towns and loot local businesses.

Mickee Hernandez, a leader of the larger California State Militia, said

Echo Company was expelled from the group for providing private security to companies fearing the false Facebook rumors that antifa was set to come loot stores in Atwater, California.

Before the group was banned from Facebook during a broader platform crackdown on militias, Echo Company posted pictures of the group in fatigues providing security in the community, including "guys standing on the roof with weapons," Hernandez said.

"Militias, in California especially, can't do things like that for hire with weapons, especially because of California law. It creates doubt in the public's mind about what we're trying to do," he said.

Brian Ferguson, a spokesperson for the California Office of Emergency Services, said there is no circumstance in which California would "activate" a militia.

"California has a National Guard. We have a military. We do not have a state militia," he said. "This is something we take very seriously. This is in no way related to the state and it is not something we condone."

Goldwasser said that while militias may provide assistance in the moment, there is danger in allowing them to take over for official aid organizations after emergencies.

On Facebook, comments continued to pour in supporting Echo Company, thanking the group for pancakes, with many insisting it was "good to stop looters."

"Thank you for your service. The police can't be everywhere they have few enough in our areas. Don't loot and we won't shoot!!" a top comment reads, quoting a Facebook post from Trump from May 2020.

Others responding to the sheriff's office's post insisted their community didn't need the militia's help.

"They have no authority. They are in costume and they want attention. That is all. Otherwise they would move their charade to [our open park with a shade filled pavilion]."

-- NBC News July 29, 2022

Alex Jones trial: After heated exchange between lawyers, jurors shown InfoWars videos

The Alex Jones-Sandy Hook trial in Austin is to determine how much money Jones must pay to the parents of 6-year-old Jesse Lewis for defamation and inflicting emotional distress for calling them liars and government conspirators in a shooting that Jones claimed was faked to provide a pretext for confiscating guns nationwide.

Scarlett Lewis and Neil Heslin, Jesse's parents, have asked Jones to pay \$150 million in damages.

InfoWars producer Daria Karpova testified that the show's reliance on Sandy Hook denier Wolfgang Halbig in 2014-15 "was the worst decision ever made by the company."

Halbig held himself out as an expert in school safety but was not, Karpova said.

Heavily influenced by Halbig, Jones questioned whether children had actually died at Sandy Hook but no longer believes that, Karpova said. "It weighs very heavily on his heart still," she said.

Jones' lawyer Aldino Reynal played a short clip from Father's Day in 2017 in which Jones said he was reaching out to the parents of Sandy Hook students to "give you my sincere condolences" and invite them to open a dialog with him. No one accepted the offer, Karpova said.

Asked by Reynal about how Jones had changed in the past four years, Karpova said he's always stressed out, frantic, can't relax and worries about sources of money and support.-- Austin American-Statesman July 28, 2022

The parent company for Alex Jones's Infowars website filed for bankruptcy, his attorney announced Friday.

Jones's attorney, F. Andino Reynal, told the courtroom that his client's media company, Free Speech Systems, had filed for bankruptcy but that it would not interfere with the defamation lawsuit.

Infowars and two other of Jones's business entities filed for bankruptcy protection in April.

Christopher Mattei, an attorney representing some of the Sandy Hook families, criticized the timing of the bankruptcy filing.

While Jones has claimed in court filings that he has a net worth of negative \$20 million, attorneys for the Sandy Hook families have pointed to records showing that Jones's Infowars store made more than \$165 million between 2015 and 2018. -- Washington Post July 30, 2022

A Texas jury decided on Friday that Jones must pay \$45.2 million in punitive damages, in addition to \$4.1 million in compensatory damages to Neil Heslin and Scarlett Lewis, the parents of a 6-year-old boy who was killed in the Sandy Hook school shooting, for falsely claiming that the incident was staged by "crisis actors." He is also expected to pay an additional \$1.5 million in fines.

-- Newsweek August 6, 2022

U.S. conspiracy theorist Alex Jones could end up owing as little as 10% of the \$45.2 million in punitive damages that a Texas jury awarded to the parents of a Sandy Hook victim last week, after a two-week trial in Austin, Texas, where Jones' Infowars radio show and webcast is based.

While juries have broad discretion on awards, Texas law caps punitive damages at \$750,000 when economic losses are not involved, as in this case. -- Reuters August 9, 2022

Three days after declaring he found someone "way better than" former President Donald Trump, far-right conspiracy theorist Alex Jones issued a pleading "emergency message" to beg the ex-president to forgive him for endorsing Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

-- Daily Beast August 22, 2022

Man who stormed Capitol with gun gets longest prison term

A Texas man convicted of storming the U.S. Capitol with a holstered handgun, helmet and body armor was sentenced Monday to more than seven years and three months in prison, the longest sentence imposed so far among hundreds of Capitol riot cases.

Prosecutors said Guy Reffitt told fellow members of the Texas Three Percenters militia group that he planned to drag House Speaker Nancy Pelosi out of the Capitol building by her ankles,

"with her head hitting every step on the way down," according to a court filing.

U.S. District Judge Dabney Friedrich also sentenced him to three years of supervised release after his prison term and ordered him to pay \$2,000 in restitution.

The longest sentence before Reffitt's was five years and three months, for two men who pleaded guilty to assaulting police officers.

Reffitt, who already has been jailed for approximately 19 months offered an expletive-laden apology to police officers, lawmakers and congressional staffers who were at the Capitol on Jan. 6. Calling himself "an idiot," Reffitt struggled to explain why he stormed the Capitol.

Friedrich questioned the sincerity of Reffitt's apology and expressions of remorse, noting that he has been publishing statements from jail in which he portrays himself and other rioters as patriots who were justifiably rebelling against a tyrannical U.S. government.

Reffitt suggested that his fiery rhetoric from prison was hyperbole necessary to raise money to support his family.

Reffitt was armed with a Smith & Wesson pistol in a holster, carrying zip-tie handcuffs and wearing body armor and a helmet equipped with a video camera when he advanced on the officers, according to prosecutors. He retreated after an officer pepper sprayed him in the face, but he waved on other rioters who ultimately breached the building, prosecutors said.

The jury found him guilty of obstructing Congress' joint session, of interfering with police officers outside the Capitol and of threatening his two teenage children if they reported him.

Reffitt's 19-year-old son, Jackson, testified that his father told him and his sister, then 16, that they would be traitors if they reported him to authorities and warned them that "traitors get shot."

Reffitt was a member of the Texas Three Percenters militia group, according to prosecutors. The Three Percenters movement refers to the myth that only 3% of Americans fought in the Revolutionary War against the British.

Rocky Hardie, a fellow member of the militia group, testified that both of them were armed with holstered handguns when they attended Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally before the riot. Hardie also said Reffitt gave him two pairs of zip-tie cuffs in case they needed to detain anybody.

Reffitt is one of seven Capitol riot defendants to get a jury trial so far.

Jurors have unanimously convicted all seven of them on all counts in their respective indictments.

– AP August 1, 2022

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Reffitt was reported to the FBI by his son, Jackson who told investigators his father had threatened him. – bbc.com August 1, 2022

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A Pennsylvania man who beat a Washington, D.C., police officer with a Trump flag during the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack was sentenced Friday to 46 months in prison.

Howard Richardson, 72, waved a flag emblazoned with Trump's name when he breached a restricted area of the Capitol, then he used the pole to strike a police officer several times, officials said.

After he serves prison sentence, Richardson will be subject to three years of supervised release. He must also pay \$2,000 in restitution.

Earlier this month, Thomas Robertson, an off-duty Virginia police officer who stormed the Capitol with a fellow officer, was sentenced to more than seven years in prison, matching the longest prison sentence so far.

But Justice Department officials are seeking the longest prison sentence yet against a Jan. 6 rioter, 17 years, for ex-police officer and former Marine Thomas Webster, who was found guilty in May of five felonies and a misdemeanor for his participation in the Capitol siege.

More than 860 people have been arrested since Jan. 6 in connection with the attack, according to the Justice Department. More than 260 of them have been charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement.

-- huffpost.com August 27, 2022

Houston man sells dozens of 3D-printed guns at city's first gun buy-back

A Houston man on Saturday sold dozens of homemade 3-D printed guns to the city at its first-ever gun buyback event.

The man, who chose to remain anonymous, told Fox 26 that "the goal was not personal profit, but to send [Houston leaders] a message about spending \$1 million tax dollars on something that has no evidence of any effect on crime."

The man traded in 62 3D-printed guns, often referred to as 'ghost guns,' and received \$50 per gun. He claimed making the weapons only cost \$3 each. The large trade-in of non-traditionally-crafted firearms has

prompted city officials to change guidance for future buybacks.

"We're going to exclude those next time around," Mayor Sylvester Turner said to Fox 26. "You'll always have people who will try and take advantage of the programs."

Officials from the mayor's office said the city collected more than 840 guns and gave participants \$50, \$100, \$150, and \$200 Visa gift cards, depending on the gun type: \$50 for broken guns, \$100 for shotguns and rifles, \$150 for handguns, and \$200 for automatic weapons.

The buyback event is part of Mayor Turner's sweeping anti-crime initiative "One Safe Houston." The program has \$53 million in federal dollars to carry out a number of different initiatives designed to reduce violent crime across the city; Mayor Turner said \$1 million of those federal dollars are earmarked for gun buyback events like Saturday's, according to Fox 26. -- Houston Chronicle August 2, 2022

BLM activist says he needed \$40K designer guard dog to be safe from white supremacists

Black Lives Matter activist Shaun King said Tuesday that he purchased a \$40,000 designer guard dog with funds donated to his political action committee to defend his family against white supremacist threats.

King wrote in a rambling Instagram post that he requires a guard dog at his home at all times because "New York City won't even allow me to have a gun" and "New Jersey doesn't have stand your ground laws and hardly allows you to even own guns."

King co-founded Grassroots Law PAC in 2019. The PAC is a force in the "defund the police" movement, having raised nearly \$4 million to help elect progressive politicians at the local level who will "fight to end mass

It's not illegal for a PAC to use donor funds to purchase a designer guard dog for its co-founder, but the PAC's contributors probably won't be too pleased to learn what their money went toward, said Scott Walter, the president of the conservative Capital Research Center.

King, who has operated several nonprofit activist groups, has previously come under fire from members of the black activist community for his fundraising tactics and loose management of donor funds.

The mother of Tamir Rice, the 12-year-old boy who was shot and killed by a Cleveland police officer in 2014,

accused King of shamelessly profiting off of her son's killing.

"Personally I don't understand how you sleep at night," Samaria Rice wrote on Instagram. -- Washington Examiner August 2, 2022

From HIMARS to Helmets – Here's Exactly What US Has Sent to Ukraine

The U.S. has sent \$9.1 billion worth of military assistance since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, including helicopters, drones and heavy artillery according to a Department of Defense document released on August 8.

The U.S. has donated:

*over 7,500 Javelin anti-armor missiles, which have proved devastating to Russian tanks

*1,400 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.

* more than 600 Switchblades and 600 Phoenix Ghosts drones, both loitering munitions that are flown into a target and then explode.

*126 155-millimeter howitzers and 561,000 rounds of ammunition.

*16 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), which have been used to strike Russian command posts, supply dumps and critical bridges well behind the front line.

*200 M113 armored personnel carriers and 20 Mi-17 helicopters.

*over 59 million rounds of small arms ammunition, along with 75,000 body armor and helmet sets.

*2 harpoon missile coastal defense systems and 18 coastal and river patrol boats.

After the U.S., Britain has provided Ukraine with the most military support, gifting the country 2.3 billion pounds in assistance by mid-July.

The British Government has also pledged to train 10,000 Ukrainian troops in the U.K. every 120 days.

A number of other European countries, including Poland, France and Germany, have also provided weaponry along with Canada and Australia. -- newsweek.com August 10, 2022

'Things are very, very rarely black and white': Ukraine volunteer reflects on serving in Russo-Ukrainian war

Ukraine volunteer Elliot Kim sat down with NextShark to share his experiences in the Russo-Ukrainian war zone, including what he did beforehand to prepare, how he got into the country and what he saw once he landed.

Kim went to Ukraine as a soldier in an international volunteer

legion from the end of April to mid-June. He then returned home to Atlanta.

He had joined the army right out of high school in 2005, and did two artillery tours in Iraq before attending Georgia Institute of Technology in 2011.

He shares that "a very haunting picture" of the Bucha massacre, where over 400 dead bodies were found — many of whom were civilians executed with their hands tied behind their backs — played a large role in his ultimate decision to go.

The Ukrainian embassy gave him basic instructions on how to get into the country.

In total, Kim took about 100 pieces of equipment to Ukraine, including a Swiss Army knife, 550 cord and some ponchos. His uniform included neck gaiters, boots and grenade pouches. The most expensive pieces of gear were his helmet and body armor, all of which civilians can buy in the country.

"So the body armor — the front plates [cost] about \$700, back plates are about \$700. Then you had about two side plates, which are about \$400. Helmets [cost] about \$700. I think in total, [it] ended up running about almost \$5,000 in equipment, maybe a little bit less."

Ukraine supplied him with a rifle and re-supply.

He states that his "primary" concern, however, was worrying that he had forgotten some things about combat.

"So there was more of just worry and reviewing old Army field manuals to make sure that I go over there and help, that I'm actually providing good quality help, and not just, 'Oh, yeah, this is how you do it,'" Kim adds.

"So it's, I guess, more worrying, nervousness and, to a lesser degree, a little bit of fear. But I think you get over that after your first combat tour."

He taught Ukrainian soldiers how to use U.S. weapons because many of them did not have experience using the missiles or drones sent over by the U.S. government.

He says that "90% of the time," he and his team were focused on just training, but anything could come up in a day.

Kim shares that he used a bit of Duolingo for Ukrainian; however, two weeks was not enough time to learn a new language.

"Fortunately," he says. "I would say about at least 10% of the population speak some English."

Kim could not disclose the location of the places he slept; however, he shared that they operated out of a "main facility" in which the soldiers slept on the ground.

"It's important to have our packing list when we come over," says Kim, who brought his own sleeping mat and sleeping bag.

"Locals would provide us [with] showers in their own homes and hotels," he shares.

As for food, locals would cook meals for them, something they were "happy to do." Kim fondly recalls the locals creating "a very welcoming environment."

Now that he is home, Kim reflects that "things are very, very rarely black and white," especially with the "particularly dark" things he witnessed in Ukraine.

Kim says something that he tried to communicate best was the global standards of war which were established during the Geneva Convention. Not executing prisoners of war, for example, is a standard he tried to emphasize.

"But it's very difficult to teach the locals, 'You have to treat these Russian prisoners of war ethically.' It's hard to get that message through to them, you know, when their loved ones have been murdered. And it's almost like the evil begets more evil."

- NetShark August 15, 2022

Informant defends role during Whitmer kidnapping plot trial

Defense attorneys grilled an FBI informant Tuesday, questioning his motivation to get inside a band of anti-government extremists.

Lawyers pressed their theme that any 2020 scheme targeting Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer was driven by agents and operatives, not marijuana-puffing rebels Adam Fox and Barry Croft Jr.

The defense challenged Chappel over his compensation — more than \$50,000 in cash.

"I never expected anything" from the government, Chappel, a 35 year old trucker, said in response to tense questions about pay and a new laptop.

Fox attorney Christopher Gibbons noted with irony that Chappel at times expressed support for firing shots at Whitmer's vacation home.

"You said it would look like a hunting accident," Gibbons said.

Chappel also suggested a way to damage the door on the house. He said he needed to say certain things to

maintain his standing but was trying to soften talk about a violent kidnapping.

Gibbons said Chappel never urged Fox to choose legal ways beyond "domestic terrorism" to settle his differences with government.

"If I was going to do anything like that he would not have kept me in the group," Chappel replied.

-- AP August 16, 2022

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A jury on Tuesday convicted two men accused of conspiring to trigger "a second American revolution" by kidnapping Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, handing the U.S. government a victory in its second attempt to prosecute the case.

Convicted were Adam Fox, 39, and Barry Croft Jr., 46..

The pair, who the government said were members of the Three Percenters militia group, were also found guilty of conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction - an explosive device that prosecutors say was intended to hinder law enforcement's response to the planned kidnapping. Croft was found guilty of an additional charge of possession of an explosive device.

The men face the possibility of life in prison.

Prosecutors used testimony from FBI informants and two key witnesses who pleaded guilty to kidnapping conspiracy charges.

The plot was aimed at forcing an end to the Democratic governor's mandates to stop the spread of the coronavirus in the early days of the pandemic, prosecutors contended.

By kidnapping the governor and putting her "on trial," they said, the men hoped to push the country into open conflict as a contentious presidential election approached in November 2020.

Fox compiled a list of tools, including handcuffs and a hood to cover Whitmer's head, for the plot, prosecutors said. Additionally, a makeshift house was built to simulate breaking in to the governor's vacation home in northern Michigan and abducting her, the Detroit News reported.

In their closing arguments, attorneys for Croft and Fox told jurors that the government's case was entrapment. They said their clients committed no crimes.

"The FBI should not exist to make people look like terrorists when they aren't," Joshua Blanchard, an attorney for Croft, told jurors.

The two are among 13 men who were arrested in October 2020 and

charged with the alleged kidnapping conspiracy. Seven of them are facing charges in state court.

-- Reuters August 23, 2022

Amid rise of 'ghost guns' in Colorado ATF makes historic rule changes in gun sales

Ghost guns" — or guns that are pieced together at home, lacking a serial number — are becoming increasingly common in Colorado and the U.S. Last year, nearly 20,000 ghost guns were confiscated in criminal investigations around the country, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Nearly all ghost guns recovered at crime scenes — more than 99% — can't be traced at all, according to the ATF.

Denver Police confiscated 166 guns without serial numbers last year, and so far this year, police have confiscated 108.

Now for the first time in 50 years, the ATF is changing its requirements for firearm serial numbers, in aims to crack down on ghost guns.

In April, President Joe Biden announced new regulations that will treat ghost guns — which can be made from parts bought online or with 3D printers — like any other firearms sold in the U.S.

The new rules will require gun parts sold online to have serial numbers.

Special Agent in Charge David Booth with ATF's Denver Division said, "So, if you make a (privately made firearm) and you want to sell it to me, you have to take it to a dealer now and the dealer has to mark it and conduct a background check on me. So now, the firearm is marked or serialized and therefore if anything I do with it or it gets stolen, the police can trace it."

In the meantime, Booth says the federal changes may have a few speeds bumps once they go into effect on August 24.

"The one problem is gun shops don't generally put serial numbers on things. So one of the snags in this is where do I go to put a serial number on this firearm," Booth said. "There's no set up serializing place for everybody to go to, or there's no set, as far as I know, there's no advice on that part yet."

Several states, including Montana, Nebraska, and Arizona, have filed suit to try to stop the rules from going into effect.

Several online retailers of gun parts are scrambling to sell their

unserialized parts before the rules change.

Companies like 80-lower.com urges visitors to "grab your freedom while you can" and links to product listings of AR-15 receivers. A similar site, 80percentarms.com, promises to continue shipping ghost gun parts until the day the rule begins.

-- 4 CBS Denver August 19, 2022

The FBI's Gestapo Tactics: Hallmarks of an Authoritarian Regime

By John Whitehead, Guest Commentator

Authoritarian danger is now posed by the FBI, whose love affair with totalitarianism began long ago. Indeed, according to the *New York Times*, the U.S., following the second World War, secretly recruited at least a thousand Nazis, including some of Hitler's highest henchmen as part of Operation Paperclip.

In fact the FBI, CIA and the military adopted many of the Third Reich's well-honed policing tactics, and have used them against American citizens.

The FBI's laundry list of crimes against the American people includes surveillance, disinformation, blackmail, entrapment, intimidation, harassment and indoctrination, overreach, abuse, misconduct, trespassing, enabling criminal activity, and damaging private property, and that's just based on what we know.

The FBI's powers have grown since 9/11, transforming it into a mammoth federal policing and surveillance agency that largely operates beyond the reach of established laws, court rulings and legislative mandates.

Today, the FBI employs more than 35,000 individuals and operates more than 56 field offices in major cities across the U.S., as well as 400 resident agencies in smaller towns, and more than 50 international offices. Their "data campus" houses more than 96 million sets of fingerprints from across the U.S. The FBI has also built a vast repository of "profiles of tens of thousands of Americans and legal residents who are not accused of any crime but who appear to be acting suspiciously to a sheriff, cop or even a neighbor." The FBI's burgeoning databases on Americans are used by local police agencies, and are being made available to employers for real-time background checks.

Through the U.S. Post Office, the FBI has access to every piece of

mail that passes through the postal system: more than 160 billion pieces are scanned and recorded annually. Moreover, the agency's National Security Letters, one of the many illicit powers authorized by the USA Patriot Act, allows the FBI to secretly demand that banks, phone companies, and other businesses provide them with customer information and not disclose those demands to the customer. An internal audit of the agency found that the FBI practice of issuing tens of thousands of NSLs every year for sensitive information such as phone and financial records, often in non-emergency cases, is riddled with widespread constitutional violations.

The FBI boasts an invasive collection of spy tools ranging from Stingray devices that can track the location of cell phones to Triggerfish devices which allow agents to eavesdrop on phone calls. In one case, the FBI actually managed to remotely reprogram a "suspect's" wireless internet card so that it would send real-time cell-site location data to Verizon, which forwarded the data to the FBI. Law enforcement agencies are also using social media tracking software to monitor Facebook, Twitter and Instagram posts. Moreover, secret FBI rules also allow agents to spy on journalists without significant judicial oversight.

The agency's biometric database is the largest in the world, encompassing everything from fingerprints, palm, face and iris scans to DNA, and is being increasingly shared between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies in an effort to target potential criminals long before they ever commit a crime. This is what's known as pre-crime. Yet it's not just your actions that will get you in trouble. It's also who you know—even minimally—and where your sympathies lie that could land you on a government watch list.

As part of the government's so-called ongoing war on terror, the nation's de facto secret police force has begun using the terms "anti-government," "extremist" and "terrorist" interchangeably. Moreover, the government continues to add to its growing list of characteristics that can be used to identify an individual (especially anyone who disagrees with the government) as a *potential* domestic terrorist in the eyes of the FBI (and its network of snitches) if you:

- * express libertarian philosophies (statements, bumper stickers)
- * exhibit Second Amendment-oriented views (NRA or gun club membership)

- * read survivalist literature, including apocalyptic fictional books
- * show signs of self-sufficiency (stockpiling food, ammo, hand tools, medical supplies)
- * fear an economic collapse
- * buy gold and barter items
- * subscribe to religious views concerning the book of Revelation
- * voice fears about Big Brother or big government
- * expound about constitutional rights and civil liberties
- * believe in a New World Order conspiracy...

From Presidents Clinton to Bush, then Obama to Trump and now Biden, it's as if we've been caught in a time loop, forced to re-live the same thing over and over again: the same assaults on our freedoms, the same disregard for the rule of law, the same subservience to the Deep State, and the same corrupt, self-serving government that exists only to amass power, enrich its shareholders and ensure its continued domination.

Can the Fourth Reich happen here?

*As I point out in my book **Battlefield America: The War on the American People** and in its fictional counterpart **The Erik Blair Diaries**, it's already happening right under our noses.*

*Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute. His most recent books are the best-selling **Battlefield America: The War on the American People**, the award-winning **A Government of Wolves: The Emerging American Police State**, and a debut dystopian fiction novel, **The Erik Blair Diaries**. Whitehead can be contacted at staff@rutherford.org Information about The Rutherford Institute is available at www.rutherford.org.*

-- <https://www.oann.com> Aug. 25, 2022

NM man accused of planning Islamic State training center

A New Mexico man was charged with attempting to set up a training center for people wishing to fight

for Islamic State, the Department of Justice said on Friday.

A federal grand jury on Aug. 23 charged Herman Leyvoune Wilson, 45, of Albuquerque, with trying to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization by setting up an "Islamic State Center" in New Mexico.

The center aimed to teach Islamic State ideology, provide training in "tactical maneuvers and martial arts," and serve as a safe haven for individuals preparing to travel and fight on behalf of the group, the statement said.

Wilson, also known as Bilal Mu'Min Abdullah, helped run an online platform that promoted Islamic State recruitment and discussed attacks in the U.S. and overseas, the statement said.

Two men sentenced in July for providing support to Islamic State said Wilson brought them into the group.

Kristopher Matthews, 36, of South Carolina and Jaylyn Molina, 24, of Texas said Wilson radicalized them to "ISIS ideology," the statement said.

Separately, Awais Chudhary, 22, of New York on Friday pleaded guilty to planning a knife attack in the Queens borough on behalf of Islamic State, the DOJ said in a statement.

-- Reuters August 27, 2022

Texas judge overrules ban on 18-to-20- year-olds carrying handguns because they were 'part of the militia in the founding era'

A federal judge in Texas has overturned the state's ban on allowing people 18 to 20 to carry a handgun.

The Firearms Policy Coalition raised a complaint against the law in 2021, saying that the ban violated the US Constitution's Second Amendment, which states "the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

The ruling is the first since the Supreme Court dramatically expanded Second Amendment rights in June when it overturned a century-old gun-permit law that required people to have a "proper cause," or a special reason, to

carry firearms outside their homes. As per the new ruling, the Second Amendment guaranteed an individual right to carry weapons in public for self-defense.

The judgment also stated that federal judiciaries must apply a "history-only" logic when making weapons regulations and can only be considered constitutional if it is in line with legislation in place when the Second Amendment was introduced.

As a result, Judge Mark Pittman of the US District Court in Fort Worth, Texas, has thrown out the state's ban on 18-to- 20-year-olds carrying handguns, saying there was no historical tradition of stopping young adults from carrying guns in public.

Pittman wrote that "based on the Second Amendment's text, as informed by Founding-Era history and tradition, the Court concludes that the Second Amendment protects against this prohibition."

Pittman added that "the undisputed historical evidence establishes that 18-to-20-year-olds were understood to be a part of the militia in the founding era," per The Guardian.

Eighteen-year-olds have bought long guns for over 60 years, as did the Uvalde shooter, who killed 19 children and two teachers with an AR-15 style semi-automatic rifle.

"After hearing Uvalde survivors demanding common-sense gun safety measures — including raising the age to buy an assault weapon — a Trump-appointed judge in Texas just issued a dangerous ruling that would allow teenagers to carry handguns in public," said Shannon Watts, founder of the gun control group Moms Demand Action, in a statement, per The Washington Post.

Texas has consistently been easing laws related to gun access.

Last year, Governor Greg Abbott signed a new state law that allowed anyone over the age of 21 to carry a handgun in most places without a permit or training.

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